

# Promoting Sustainable Consumption

## 推廣可持續消費

### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The environmental impact of consumption is a matter of global concern. Therefore, following our vision for a safe and sustainable consumption marketplace, the Consumer Council promotes and supports sustainable consumption through comparative product testing and dissemination of information which enables consumers to make environmentally friendly choices, and also encourages them to help conservation of natural resources and waste reduction.

### WHAT WE HAVE DONE

In comparative product testing, environmental parameters such as energy efficiency, recyclability of products and packaging materials, durability and emissions of volatile organic compounds are often incorporated with a view to informing consumers about the use of products and their impact on health and the environment. We also send submissions to the Government to support initiatives in establishing legislations for environmental protection.

### Car Test Report: Difference in Environmental Performance Assessed

The tests were conducted by the International Consumer Research & Testing (ICRT) and an automobile association in Europe, covering 20 models of cars from nine different brands available in Hong Kong. Driving cycle tests were conducted in the laboratory using controlled scientific methods to assess their environmental performance.

On fuel consumption, the differences in average fuel consumption (AFC) in the small and the large family car categories were 56% and 65% respectively, when comparing the sample with the highest and the lowest AFC.

Carbon dioxide is recognised as one of the greenhouse gases. The Council's report showed that a sports car styled sample in the

### 推廣可持續消費的重要性

消費對環境的影響是全球關注的課題。因此，本會以追求安全及可持續消費的市場為目標，透過測試產品及發布資訊，推廣及支持可持續消費，幫助消費者選擇較環保的產品，以達到保護自然資源，減少廢物的目的。

### 我們完成的工作

我們的產品測試，也加進環境因素的評估，例如能源效率、產品及包裝的可循環再生性、耐用程度及會否釋出揮發性有機化合物等，藉以讓消費者知悉產品對環境及健康的影響。我們亦就政府的各種有關環境保護的提案發表意見。

### 汽車測試報告：汽車的環保表現參差

測試由國際消費者研究及試驗組織 (International Consumer Research & Testing) 與歐洲的汽車會合作，涵蓋本港有售的九個牌子，共20款汽車。駕駛循環測試在實驗室內進行，以科學方法評估樣本的環保表現。

耗油量測試發現，小型家庭房車及大型家庭房車組別中，平均耗油量最高的樣本與平均耗油量最低的樣本比較，分別相差56%及65%。

二氧化碳被認為是導致地球溫室效應的氣體之一。本會的報告指出，一款小型家庭房車組別的跑車款樣本，其平均二氧化碳排放量相比同組別的排放量最低的樣本高60% (除電動車外)。

small family car category recorded 60% higher in carbon dioxide emissions as compared with that of the best performing sample (except electric car) in the same category.

Emission of other pollutants such as carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and suspended particulates was also measured (except for electric car). During the driving cycle tests, a relatively low level of these pollutants was recorded in most of the samples. However, a hybrid vehicle sample in the executive car category produced relatively high emissions of pollutants.

## Aftersales Services of Television Sets

Aftersales and maintenance services of durable consumer goods are critical in facilitating sustainable consumptions. To examine the coverage of aftersales services of TV sets, the Council surveyed the maintenance and warranty services of 20 brands of LCD/LED TV and plasma TV.

Out of the 20 brands studied, half of them did not offer extended warranties. For those which offered such services, the maintenance was extended for one to three years, but fees could vary from \$250 to \$9,589 depending on their size and warranty period. Apart from assessing the needs for repair within a certain period, consumers are advised to review the costs of maintenance for extended warranties.

Besides, the study also found that the sole agent's storage period of spare parts of some TV sets was equal to the agent's free warranty period. Consumer who bought their TVs at a time close to the model's discontinuation of production, might face difficulty in finding spare parts for repair, especially after the free warranty period.

The Council advised manufacturers and their agent to prolong the life of their products through the provision of maintenance and extended warranty services at a reasonable price, and increase in the storage period and inventory level of spare parts and components, as well as greater transparency of warranty plans.

## Excessive Packaging May Pose Adverse Environmental Impact

The Council examined several dozens of chocolate, sweet treats, biscuit, pastry and noodle gift sets during the Chinese New Year and found over-packaging was still rampant – despite repeated calls to protect the environment.

除電動車樣本外，其餘樣本進行了污染物排放量的測試，包括一氧化碳、碳氫化合物、氮氧化物及懸浮粒子。在駕駛循環測試中，大部分樣本量得的污染物排放量都頗低，但一款行政人員房車組別的油電混合動力汽車樣本量得的污染物排放量較高。

## 電視機的售後服務

耐用消費品的售後及維修服務對消費者可否支持可持續消費至關重要。為瞭解電視機售後服務的保障範圍，本會調查了市面上20個牌子的液晶體（包括LED背光液晶體顯示屏）及等離子電視機的保用及維修服務。

20個牌子中，半數不提供續保計劃，而在提供續保計劃的牌子當中，其計劃的有效期由一至三年不等。收費視乎電視機尺寸及保用期而定，由港幣250元至9,589元不等。在評估是否需要購買續保計劃時，消費者除考慮電視機會否在一段日子內損壞而需要維修之外，亦應衡量所涉及的維修費用。

調查亦發現，部分電視機的零件存倉期等同新機保用期，若消費者購置電視機時，該款型號已接近停產，在保用期完結時，可能已沒有零件供維修之用，消費者或會因為無法維修而被迫購買新產品。

本會呼籲，電器生產商及代理商應設法延長其產品的壽命，例如提供價格合理的維修服務及續保計劃、加強零件存倉的年期及數量，以及增加保用計劃的資訊透明度。

## 過度包裝加重環境負擔

本會在農曆新年期間檢視了數十款朱古力、糖果、餅乾、糕點及麵食等賀年禮盒，發現過度包裝的問題仍然嚴重，產品生產商無視社會一直以來對保護環境的訴求。

Over-packaging were mostly found in three forms: (a) use of excessive packaging materials for auspicious designs, (b) use of bigger than needed container to store the content and, (c) use of multiple layers of packaging materials.

Currently there is no legislation regulating the packaging of products in Hong Kong. In 2005, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) introduced the 'Guidelines on Environmental Mooncake Packaging Design' to the trade. The Government is urged to consider expanding the scope to other consumer products.

Manufacturers were called to take the environment into consideration when designing the packaging of their products.

### **Submission to the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development on Interim Review of the Scheme of Control Agreements with Two Power Companies in 2013**

The Council supported the Government's proactive stance in reviewing the arrangements of the Scheme of Control for the Hong Kong electricity sector, and its commitment to maintaining robust oversight of the arrangements into the future.

In the current regulatory regime, the two power companies are allowed to earn a high risk-free permitted rate of return on their Average Net Fixed Assets, they are able to transfer all business risks associated with fuel price fluctuations, operational cost and forecasting error in relation to the electricity demand to consumers.

To strive for fairness to consumers, the Council suggested that the power companies should enhance the transparency in fuel prices and enable consumers to monitor the trend of prices.

Besides, it is noted that the actual electricity demand was well below the predicted demand forecasted by the two power companies in the last four years. For approval of development and investment plans proposed by the two power companies for the coming five years, the Council suggested the Government should consider the discrepancy of the predicted and the actual demand of electricity to prevent excess investment.

The power companies should also be obliged to curb the increasing demand for electricity. A fair system should be placed that residential users would benefit equally from the cost saving in respect of electricity supply resulting from the demand management policy.

過度包裝的形式約有三種：(1)為追求吉祥設計浪費包裝物料、(2)盒大餡小和(3)多層包裝。

本港現時沒有法例規範商品的包裝，而環境保護署於二零零五年曾就月餅包裝向業界推出《月餅包裝設計的環保建議》，本會建議政府可以擴大現行的環保建議，把適用範圍由月餅擴大至其他消費品。

本會建議製造商在製造產品時，將環保元素融入設計當中。

### **就兩家電力公司的《管制計劃協議》中期檢討提出意見**

本會支持政府檢討現行本港電力市場的管制協議，以維持將來監察電力市場健全的制度。

在現行的管制協議下，兩間電力公司可將燃油價格波動、與電力需求有關的營運成本和電力需求預測誤差等風險轉嫁予消費者，並可在無商業風險的條件下，利用其平均固定資產賺取可觀的回報。

為消費者爭取更公平的待遇，本會認為電力公司提高燃料成本的透明度，令消費者從而可監察燃料價格的趨勢。

此外，在過去四年期間，本港實際的電力需求遠低於兩電所預測的電力需求。為免政府過度投資，本會建議政府評估兩電提出未來五年的發展和投資計劃時，應將兩電過往對電力需求預測的差異列入考慮因素。

兩間電力公司有責任遏制不斷上升的電力需求。他們應建立公平的需求管理政策，使住宅用戶可以受益於節約用電。

The power companies are urged to take up more social obligation by devoting their efforts to exploring the future development and application of renewable energy.

The Council believed that full disclosure by way of separate account reporting by different segments may enhance transparency and provide the necessary information for formulating the possible market reform of the electricity sector.

## Green Housekeeping

At the Consumer Council Office, every endeavour has been made to reduce energy and paper consumption through minimising copying, reusing paper, electronic transfer of information, the use of energy efficient and environmentally friendly office equipment and refraining from the use of materials which are harmful to the environment.

政府應敦促兩間電力公司負起更多社會責任，為將來發展及實際應用可再生能源投入更多資源。

本會相信兩間電力公司如能按供電供應鏈的營運種類（如造電、配電和零售）分別入賬，和在公開的財務報告披露有關賬目，可提高透明度及為電力市場將來改革提供重要的參考資料。

## 環保辦公室

為求節省能源及減低紙張的消耗量，本會辦事處盡量減少影印、鼓勵員工雙面用紙、利用電子郵件傳達訊息，及使用慳電及環保的文儀器材，亦避免採用有害環境的物料。